

# Reading Toolkit: Grade 6 Objective 3.A.4.b

Standard 3.0 Comprehension of Literary Text

Topic A. Comprehension of Literary Text

Indicator 4. Analyze elements of poetry to facilitate understanding and interpretation

Objective b. Identify and explain the meaning of words, lines, and stanzas

Assessment Limits:

Specific meaning of words, lines and/or stanzas

Speaker versus the poet

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## Lesson Seeds

### Reading Grade 6 Objective 3.A.4.b

#### Activities

This activity requires students to have prior knowledge of the multiple meanings of words. The teacher will select at least four different poems which contain a word or words with multiple meanings which is important to the understanding of the poem. The teacher will create a chart for each multiple meaning word placing the word at the top of the chart and dividing the remainder of the chart into four squares. The charts should be placed in various areas of the classroom. The class should be divided into the number of small groups which will allow one group to each chart. The group members for each chart will draw a picture depicting a different meaning for that chart's word. After the pictures are complete, a student or teacher should read aloud the poem from which that word comes. Then students need to decide which picture accurately shows the meaning of the word as it is used in the poem. Continue with this activity until all words' meanings have been decided.

To prepare for this activity, the teacher will organize a four square graphic organizer. Square One requires a student to summarize the poem. Square Two requires a student to decide whether the poem has a message, and, if it does, to record that message. Square Three requires the reader to identify and record key words or phrases from the poem. Square Four requires the reader to record any questions they may have about the poem. Next, place students in small groups providing each group with the four square organizer and a poem. Students should read the poem and then cooperatively complete the organizer. Each group should share its completed organizer with the rest of the class.

To prepare for this activity the teacher should select an age appropriate poem of eight to ten lines and print each line of the poem on an individual sentence strip. To begin the activity with students the teacher should select eight to ten students to receive a poetry line sentence strip. These students should position themselves in an open area of the classroom and remaining students should form a circle around them in a Fishbowl configuration. Each student holding a sentence strip should read aloud its line of poetry and offer, if possible, a restatement of its meaning. Any student in the outer circle may also offer suggestions regarding the meaning of the line. Once each student has shared his/her line and its meaning has been suggested, students in the outer circle may direct students in the inner circle to place themselves to show the correct order of lines in the poem. Once the correct order has been set, a student should read aloud the entire poem. Next students and teacher should discuss the meaning of the complete poem with attention given to whether or not the suggested line meanings change when the complete poem is considered.

Once the teacher has instructed students about the difference between the poet and the speaker of the poem, students should be able to read and complete the following chart independently. The teacher should provide students with an age appropriate poem that they will read silently. A suggestion: lyric poetry works well with this activity. Once students have read the poem they may complete the chart individually, with a partner, or with a small group.

Speaker Identification	Text Source
Male/Female	
Species	
Age	

Cultural Background	
Other Text Specific Identifiers	

The teacher and students should discuss answers to verify correctness. The same activity can be completed with small groups of students reading different poems.

The teacher will select a variety of age appropriate poems and compose paraphrases of each poem for student instruction. The teacher will read aloud a selected poem and then read aloud the accompanying paraphrase. Then teacher and students will discuss how the paraphrase is different from the original poem, how it is the same, and how a paraphrase helps one construct their own meaning of a text. Next, the teacher will give the remaining poems to students and have them match the remaining paraphrases to the original text. Finally students should be given a final poem that they will read silently and then paraphrase orally or in written form.

To help students distinguish the speaker of the poem from the poet, the teacher should review the role of the narrator in prose. Once students understand the role of the narrator in prose, they can transfer that information to a piece of narrative poetry. First students should read an age appropriate narrative poem. Next, students should identify the point of view of the speaker of the poem as first person (a character in the poem), third person (a character not in the poem who observes and then reports actions within the poem), third person limited (a character not in the poem but with insight into the thoughts of a single character in the poem), or third person omniscient (a character not in the poem but with insight into the thoughts of all the characters in the poem). Through discussion, students should come to understand that the speaker of the poem like a narrator in prose is a creation of the poet. Finally students should be able to identify characteristics of the speaker of the poem. An extension of this activity would require students to select another character in the narrative poem to serve as the speaker and discuss how the poem would change were the speaker to change.

Students will read an age appropriate poem. After reading the poem the teacher will provide students with an accompanying text related to the poem: brief biography of the poet, information about the poem's time period, information about any poetry feature, etc...Students will read that text for further information. Prior to giving students the accompanying text, the teacher will have extracted particular words and phrases from that text and recorded them on slips of paper, note cards, etc...Next, students will be placed in small groups; each group will be given a set of the extracted words and phrases. The group of students will be instructed to construct a poem from those words and phrases that will mirror the importance of the information in the prose passage. Students may use a combination of long and short lines, single word lines, repetition of words, etc...to emphasize the importance of word placement in poetry. When each poem has been organized, each group will present the poem to the class and explain the significance of the word placement.

## Clarification

### Reading Grade 6 Indicator 3.A.4

To show proficiency of the skills stated in this indicator, a reader will demonstrate an understanding of the elements of poetry which are the components through which poetry is structured and composed. Identification of each component and its relationship to all other components in a poem assist a reader in comprehension of the entire text of the poem. When a poem requires more complex thought processes, a reader advances from identification of poetry elements to the explanation, analysis, and evaluation of those elements. Thinking about all the elements of a poem and determining how they fit together allow a reader to understand a poem in all of its complexity.

In order to identify poetry as a literary form and be able to distinguish a particular poem from other types of poetry, a reader must identify and use a poem's structural features. Poems can tell stories, describe the positive and negative elements of a character, place, or thing, argue a position, express emotions, or create an image. Knowing the structure of a poem helps a reader determine a purpose for the poem and comprehend it in literal and abstract ways.

#### Structural Features

A line or verse is a single line of poetry.

A stanza is two or more lines of poetry.

A refrain is a series of words or a line of poetry that is regularly repeated within the poem.

A rhyme is a repetition of sounds at the end of words.

A rhyme scheme is an arrangement of end rhymes in a poem. A pattern is organized by assigning a letter of the alphabet to each line. The first line of a poem is assigned the letter A. Each following line of poetry that rhymes with the first line is also assigned the letter A.

#### Types of Poems

A ballad tells a story and is meant to be sung or recited aloud.

A cinquain is based on syllable or word count. A traditional cinquain moves by line from two syllables to four syllables to six syllables to eight syllables and concludes with two syllables. The more current form of cinquain moves by line from one word to two words to three words to four words and concludes with a single word.

A diamante moves from a subject in the first line of the poem to a completely different subject in the last line of the poem. The structure of a diamante by line goes from one noun, the subject, two adjectives, three participles, four nouns, three participles, two adjectives, and concludes with one noun which is different from the noun in the first line.

An elegy is a sad poem which shows grief for the dead.

A haiku is a form of Japanese poetry which has three lines focused on a single element.

A lyric poem can appear in a variety of forms and shows the thoughts and feelings of one speaker.

A narrative poem tells a story in verse.

A shape poem has the form of its subject. For example a poem about a tree is shaped like a tree.

To understand a poem fully with all of its complexities a reader should focus on the meaning/s of each word within that poem that will lead to an understanding of individual lines and continue to understanding of an entire stanza. Poets choose their words with purpose and care. Reviewing the multiple meanings of words and attending to how a word is used contextually helps a reader discern shades of meaning within an individual word. Knowing the denotation of a word is an important first step, but knowing connotations of a word is critical to a reader of poetry. A reader should also be aware of the symbolic value of words in poetry. Knowing that an object or person symbolizes a quality or idea is essential to comprehension.

A critical reader understands that the speaker of the poem is not always the poet. The speaker is the creation of the poet and voices the words of the poem. The speaker has a personality and attitude that is discernable to a reader. Being attentive to the qualities and attitude of the speaker and connecting them to the words of the poem assists a reader with comprehension.

The organization of the words in a poem is another clue for a reader. The actual placement of a word within a line of poetry can be pivotal to understanding. The length of a poem's lines can focus a reader on the importance of certain words within a poem. The division between stanzas of a poem can signal the conclusion of one idea to move to another or the strengthening of an initial idea that continues to evolve throughout the poem. Because the words of a poem are more compact than prose, the placement, denotation, connotation, symbolism, and speaker of the words all become vital elements to creating meaning for a reader.

Because poetry is meant to be read or spoken aloud, the sound of the words is a critical piece of understanding. Listening to the rhyming of words, the organization of the rhyming words, the repetition of sounds, the imitation of natural sounds, and the relationship among these sound devices and how they contribute to the meaning of a poem are all elements a critical reader must explore. Discovering the bond between the sound and sense of a poem assists a reader with comprehension.

A rhyme is a repetition of sounds at the end of words.

A rhyme scheme is an arrangement of end rhymes in a poem. A pattern is organized by assigning a letter of the alphabet to each line. The first line of a poem is assigned the letter A. Each following line of poetry that rhymes with the first line is also assigned the letter A.

A poem's rhythm is created by the organization of sound from the placement of stressed and unstressed syllables in a line of poetry. The difference between stressed and unstressed syllable concerns the degree of emphasis when words are spoken.

Alliteration is a repetition of beginning consonant sounds in words.

Assonance is a repetition of vowel sounds in words.

Consonance is the pleasing arrangement of sounds in words.

Onomatopoeia is the use of words that sound like the natural noises they name.

A poet may use a sound device to emphasize a particular idea, create a melodious sound to foster a pleasant mood, or put together a series of harsh sounds to establish an angry tone. When a critical reader can determine a purpose for the poet's use of sound devices, a reader has constructed meaning from a poem.

In a narrative poem or ballad, the setting of that poem is integral to a reader's understanding. The setting addresses the time and place of the poem's action and plays a role in establishing the mood of a poem. The mood is the feeling of a poem. Mood is created by the poet's choice of words, sensory detail, and rhythm. The attitude of the poet or speaker toward his/her subject is the tone of the poem. Again, the poet's choice of words, sensory detail and rhythm help a reader determine the attitude toward the subject. For more detailed information about setting and mood, consult the Literary Clarification for Indicator Three, and for more detailed information about tone, consult the Literary Clarification for Indicator Seven.